

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director, Central Intelligence
SUBJECT: Comments on the Soviet Man-in-Space event

1. This memorandum furnished for information only per your request.
2. The successful Soviet man-in-space effort of 12 April appears to have been marked by remarkable Soviet efforts to assure maximum worldwide public attention to the event. The steady stream of rumors from Moscow sources, reported by press and radio correspondents, beginning on the morning of 10 April all seem in retrospect to have been part of a carefully planned effort by Moscow to rivet public attention to the event which finally occurred last night.
3. The Soviet man-in-space effort seems to have been marked also by a high degree of confidence that the operation would be successful, particularly after the launching phase was completed. Moscow radio declared last night at 10:00 PM (EST) [redacted] that an official announcement would be made concerning the man-in-space press reports at 2:00 AM (EST). At 2:03 AM, Moscow Radio announced the launching [redacted] and followed with unusual running

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commentaries on the astronaut's condition until he landed at about 3:00 AM.

4. The 10:00 PM announcement had been worded in such a way as to permit the Russians to officially debunk the earlier press reports if the initial phases of the man-in-space operation turned out to be unsuccessful. On balance, however, we believe the Soviet performance reflected a high degree of Soviet assurance that the effort would prove successful.

5. The 10 April rumors emanating from Moscow grew out of the appearance of a crew of Soviet television cameramen at the Central Telegraph office in Moscow near mid-day, Moscow time. They were there,

25X1 [redacted] "to film reaction of the foreign correspondents" to an announcement which the Soviet television men had apparently expected about that time. When queried about the reason for his presence, one of the Russian technicians said "man", and gestured skyward. However, there was no official announcement, and after more than an hour's wait and some checking by telephone, the television crew departed. From then on, through the day, virtually all Western correspondents in Moscow, reported rumors that the Russians had put a man-in-space. The correspondents quoted various sources -- taxi drivers and Soviet journalists.

6. The apparent Soviet publicity effort continued through 11 April. At a luncheon that day with a French official in Paris, a diplomat claimed

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it was a fact that a Soviet astronaut was in space. Of greater impact was a story breaking in the London Daily Worker at about the same time. The Daily Worker's correspondent in Moscow reported that a Soviet astronaut had been launched last Friday, had orbited the earth three times and had been recovered. According to this story, the astronaut was physically fit, but had suffered emotional after-effects.

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11. In sum, then, we conclude that there was no substance to the various rumors concerning a man-in-space emanating from Communist sources on 10 and 11 April; that these rumors were part of a carefully prepared Soviet effort to rivet the world's attention to this morning's event; and that the entire operation was apparently marked by Moscow's confidence that the astronaut's flight would be successful.

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